



**APPROVED MINUTES**  
**Idaho Soil Conservation Commission**  
**2270 Old Penitentiary Road**  
**Boise, Idaho**

The Idaho Soil Conservation Commission (ISCC) held its regular, bi-monthly meeting on January 10, 2005 in lower conference rooms 1 and 2 at the Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) in Boise, ID. Attendance was as follows:

Members: Bill Whittom, Chairman  
J. Morgan Evans, Vice-Chairman  
Jerry Reid, Member

Members not Present: Gary Grindstaff, Secretary  
Tom Johnston, Member

Advisors: Kyle Hawley, Idaho Association of Soil Conservation  
Districts (IASCD)

Advisors not present: Paul McCawley, University of Idaho (U of I)  
Rich Sims, USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service  
(NRCS)

Others: Jerry Nicolescu, ISCC  
Jennifer Ambrose, ISCC  
Kathie Shea, ISCC  
Christy Mastin, ISCC  
Tony Bennett, ISCC  
Biff Burleigh, ISCC  
Russell Knight, ISCC  
Eileen Rowan, ISCC  
Pat McCoy, Capitol Press  
Susan Tharp, Natural Resources Conservation Service  
(NRCS)

Janet Hohle, ISCC  
Kent Foster, IASCD  
Jody Fagan, NRCS  
Claude Bruce, Payette SWCD  
Kevin Koester, IASCD  
Alice Wallace, IASCD  
Steve Miller, IASCD  
Darwin Josephson, IASCD  
Mariane Josephson  
John Herman, Nez Perce SWCD  
Preston Kinne, Nez Perce SWCD  
David Shropshire, Idaho Carbon Sequestration Advisory

Committee  
Donell Fluckiger, ISCC

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Governor  
Dirk Kempthorne

Commission members  
Jerry Reid  
Bill Whittom  
J. Morgan Evans  
Gary Grindstaff  
Tom Johnston

Administrator  
Jerry Nicolescu

Kent Foster, IASCD  
Chuck Pentzer, ISCC  
Carolyn Firth, IASCD  
Mary Rosen, Idaho Association of Soil Conservation

Districts

## **Welcome/Announcements**

Chairman Whittom called the meeting to order at 11:04 A.M. Nez Perce SWCD board member John Herman and manager Preston Kinne, were welcomed to the meeting, along with Eileen Rowan, Russell Knight, and Pat McCoy.

## **Financial Reports**

### *December 2004 General Fund Report*

Jerry Nicolescu distributed an updated handout for the December 2004 financial report. Nicolescu pointed out the \$2,153.33 year-to-date capitol outlay receipts which he attributes to the sale of vehicles. He went on to note 66% of the operating budget had been expended as of December 31, 2004. Nicolescu also reviewed handwritten changes on page three of the general fund report which corrected a transposition error in the ISDA's original report. Finally, it was noted that the Districts' second allocation was not included in the figures reported for Trustee and Benefit funds. Reid moved to approve the December 2004 financial report. Evans seconded and the motion carried.

### *December 2004 Resource Conservation and Rangeland Development Program Financial Report (RCRDP)*

Christy Mastin handed out copies of the December 2004 RCRDP financial update and quickly reviewed the details of the report. Nine loans were reported as pending disbursement and Mastin noted two of those nine had withdrawn their requests. Total obligated funds were listed as \$234,283. Reid moved to approve the RCRDP report as submitted. Evans seconded and the motion carried.

## **Minutes**

Whittom asked if the minutes had been read. Everyone acknowledged that they had taken the opportunity to read them. Evans moved to approve the November 7, November 10, December 14, and December 21 minutes as submitted. Reid seconded and the motion carried.

## **District Allocations**

Shea shared a summary of Districts' second allocations, noting requests were currently being funded at 66.5% - not the lowest allocation rate on file (62%), but very near. Reid asked if business plans were required for all Districts and Shea indicated that only Districts with excess funds were required to submit a business plan. Shea brought everyone's attention to Franklin SCD's allocation; their allocation was much higher than

it has been in the past. In-kind services performed by Franklin County (use of conference room spaces, election expenses, etc) were eligible as match and therefore raised the amount of their allocation.

On a somewhat related note, Evans asked if bids had been solicited for District insurance. Shea said that the first time bids were requested, there were few parties interested. The Districts' insurance policy is now provided using the services of a brokerage service that finds the best rate possible.

Reid moved to approve the allocation report; Evans seconded and the motion carried.

## **Agency Reports**

### *Natural Resources Conservation Service*

Shea introduced Susan Tharp, NRCS State Administrative Officer, who would be presenting the NRCS quarterly report in Rich Sims' absence. Tharp distributed a summary report. Highlights of the report are as follows:

- Numerous personnel changes underway due to retirement of the following individuals: Benito Mar, Art Shoemaker, Lee Brooks, Gary Pfieffe.
- Craters of the Moon soil surveys currently underway
- Hardcopies of soil surveys will not be produced after this year
- Due to budget cutbacks, funding for all Farm Bill programs has been reduced – full allowances may be seen by January 21<sup>st</sup>
- A hiring freeze is in place through the end of the month of January
- Partnership agreements have not worked as well as anticipated although meetings have been scheduled to talk about the apparent lack of participation
- Sims (and Nicolescu) will be attending one SWCD/SCD board meeting per month to improve communications, discuss resource concerns, and address program issues.

Susan Tharp, Jody Fagan, Claude Bruce, Kevin Koester, Alice Wallace, Steve Miller, Darwin and Marianne Josephson, John Herman, David Shropshire, Donell Fluckiger, Kyle Hawley, Kent Foster, Chuck Pentzer, Carolyn Firth, and Mary Rosen were welcomed to the meeting at 11:35 am.

## **Staff Recognition**

During the Partnership luncheon, Tony Bennett presented plaques to several staff members in recognition of the outstanding work they have been performing. Field staff members receiving awards included Chuck Pentzer, Carolyn Firth, Mary Rosen, and Eileen Rowan. Whitton thanked everyone and noted "the Partnership makes all this good work possible".

### **National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD)**

There was a brief discussion of the upcoming NACD annual conference in Atlanta. Nicolescu indicated the Commission usually tries to send two delegates if budgets allow. Evans moved to send at least one if not two members to Atlanta. Reid seconded and the motion carried. Whittom and Reid were tentatively selected to attend.

### **Carbon Sequestration Report**

Tony Bennett introduced David Shropshire, an energy specialist with INEEL. Shropshire and Bennett presented an update on the Commission's role in Idaho's carbon sequestration efforts. The Big Sky Regional Carbon Sequestration Partnership (BSRCSP) recently approached the Idaho Carbon Sequestration Advisory Committee (ICSAC) with an MOU which would establish a collaborative relationship with several key tasks. The MOU specifically notes the ICSAC will share duties related to:

1. the characteristics of promising terrestrial and geological storage sites
2. the identification and application in Phase II of future of greenhouse gas measurement and verification technologies and regulatory/compliance issues
3. identification of terrestrial carbon sequestration technologies and practices that could serve as case studies or pilot projects in Phase II

Shropshire gave a PowerPoint presentation which encompassed details of BSRCSP's organization and current projects as well as a similar update on the ICSAC. A brief synopsis of that presentation is noted below:

- Completed greenhouse gas inventory needed for Idaho
- Carbon sequestration represents potential revenue for Idaho producers
- "Carbon-friendly" practices are eligible for cost-sharing through EQIP
- ISCC could award monetary grants for demonstration projects related to innovative carbon sequestration practices
- Travel reimbursement is needed for non-government members of ICSAC as travel for private individuals is often cost-prohibitive

Reid moved the BSRCSP/ICSAC MOU be signed by the Commission Chairman. Evans seconded and the motion carried.

### **Executive Session**

Reid moved to enter Executive Session pursuant to I.C. 67-2345 to discuss legal and personnel issues. Evans seconded. Roll call vote; Evans – Aye; Reid – Aye; Whittom – Aye. Motion carried. The Commission entered executive session at 1:20 p.m. Kyle Hawley, Preston Kinne, and John Herman were invited to remain along with Jerry Nicolescu. All others left the meeting.

With no further business to discuss, Whittom ended Executive Session at 2:50 p.m. The Chairman indicated no decisions were made during Executive Session. Regular meeting session was declared.

Evans moved to have the administrator (Nicolescu) immediately contact the Attorney General's office to talk about the Nez Perce SWCD issues. It was further moved that:

- 1) the resignations of two supervisors with the Nez Perce SWCD are to be held by the Executive Director of the IASCD.
- 2) the SCC/IASCD/NRCS are to begin an immediate in-depth program audit
- 3) the Nez Perce District commits to a full, comprehensive financial audit (paid fully by the District) as part of its regular audit procedures at fiscal year end.

Reid seconded the motion and the motion carried.

## **Project Update Reports**

### *Upper Salmon Basin Watershed Project (USBWP)*

Russell Knight presented an update on the USBWP. He noted there are currently three primary funding sources for the more than 30 projects being implemented in the Upper Salmon Basin: the United States Fish and Wildlife

Service (USFWS) Fisheries Restoration Irrigation Mitigation Act (FRIMA), Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF) and/or the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA). A summary of those projects is listed below:

#### **FRIMA**

- Falls Creek
- Panther Creek Screens
- Wallace Creek
- Fury Lane

#### **PCSRF**

- Cotton Lane Fence
- Fife Ranch Fence
- Hawley Creek Siphon
- Hooper Lane Fence
- L-6, S-14 Transfer (planning)
- Project Planner
- Screen Testing
- Iron Creek Reconnection

#### **BPA (Custer SWCD)**

- Gini Canal Flume
- S-40 Diversion Replacement
- EF-15 Diversion Replacement
- EF-17 Diversion Replacement
- Herd Creek 2 Diversion Replacement
- Baker Stockwater
- Pahsimeroi Fence Crossing
- Muddy Springs Fence
- Bauchman Stockwater
- Philps Slough Fence
- Neider Log Worm Riparian Fence

#### **BPA (Lemhi SWCD)**

- Goddard Stockwater
- Salmon Valley Golf Course
- L-44 Diversion Replacement
- Lemhi Back-Door Barriers
- Hayden Fence Crossing
- Bohannon Creek Irrigation
- Maurer Riparian Fence
- Iron Creek Riparian Fence
- Iron Creek Stockwater

Evans asked what kind of working relationship was shared between staff of the USBWP and the US Forest Service (USFS). Knight indicated "reluctant" might best describe the relationship. Environmental compliance has been an issue in the Salmon and Challis National Forests. The Panther Creek screen project, a high turnover rate, and other personnel changes have also presented a challenge where USFS is concerned.

Knight announced that Wendy Koons had been hired as a Water Quality Resource Conservationist, replacing Carl Rudeen, and Ingrid Enschede would soon be joining the USBWP team. Enschede, Knight reported, is a project planner whose position is funded by PCSRF funding.

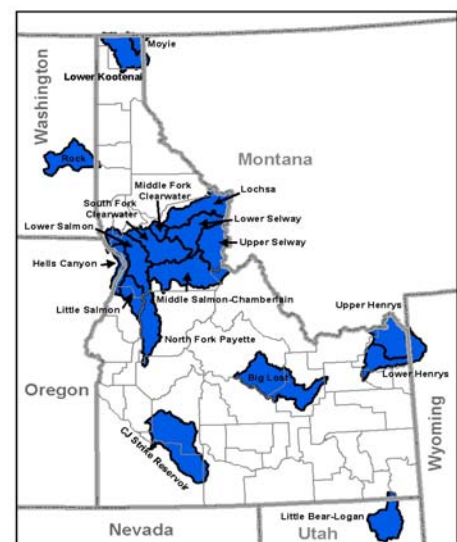
#### *Clearwater Focus Program (CFP) Update Report*

Janet Hohle, Clearwater Focus Program Coordinator, delivered a brief update on the CFP. Details of her report below:

- Clearwater Subbasin Plan, Subbasin Planning, and Project Solicitation: Subbasin roll-up to provincial level, Clearwater and Salmon subbasins are the Mountain Snake Province in terms of the Northwest Power and Conservation Council's Columbia River Fish and Wildlife Program
- Project coordination and funding sources: New project development and coordination, distribution of information on funding sources available for watershed work to project partners.
- Draft legal language development: Look into having draft language developed for Districts to use in contracting with landowners, contracting with other agencies, and contracting with other contractors. Bonneville has indicated this can be done under the Focus Coordination contract.
- Snake River Basin Adjudication: Minimum in-stream flow designations have been set for Cottonwood Creek, Lawyer Creek, Lapwai Creek
- EPA Temperature Guidance: Idaho State pilot project to begin to evaluate whether the Environmental Protection Agency's temperature standards can be applied in Idaho. The temperature standards in the guidance document are based on various life stages of salmonids. The test pilot in the Clearwater subbasin is using existing fish and temperature data in the Lochsa River watershed.
- Biological Opinion on remand update

#### **Conservation Security Program (CSP)**

Jody Fagan, Public Affairs Specialist for NRCS, reported on the status of CSP. She noted fifteen Idaho watersheds have been selected for the 2005 Conservation Security Program. These watersheds are spread throughout the state and comprise about 2,100 potentially eligible farmers and ranchers. Fagan went on to explain that CSP is a voluntary program rewarding those farmers and ranchers meeting the highest conservation standards on their land. Over the next eight years, all of Idaho's producers will have the opportunity to apply for CSP. Application periods and sign-up criteria for each 2005 watershed will be posted as soon as they are announced by the Secretary of Agriculture.



Two public meetings are planned for each watershed in early March. It is anticipated that signup will occur in late March, although no definitive decision has been reached.

Fagan reported a new publication – the Idaho Conservation Record book – will be out soon.

## **Agency Reports**

### *ISDA*

The ISDA report was delivered by Director Pat Takasugi. A summary of his comments is noted below:

- Legislative meetings promise good news – capitol replacement is a possibility
- Water appears to be the biggest issue at the State House this year
- An item of great concern is the agreement with the Nez Perce concerning the Snake River adjudication
- CREP is being scrutinized
- Predictions indicate an overall budget increase of 6%
- FY06/07 is looking rather slim – the 1% sales tax increase is slated to sunset June 30, 2005
- Congress will be scrutinizing how CSP is handled in our state as we are facilitating pilot projects
- Animal ID program is moving along smoothly
- Food safety is becoming an issue of national concern with respect to the danger of a poisoned food supply
- Tom Daley has been announced as the new administrator for ISDA's Plant Industries division

### *IDEA*

Kathie Shea reported that the IDEA meeting had been rescheduled due to inclement weather. Their next meeting will be scheduled to coincide with the Commission's March meeting. Election of officers to be conducted at that time.

### *IASCD*

Kyle Hawley delivered the IASCD report. Highlights as noted below:

- Envirothon 2005 scheduled for May 9-10 at the Living Waters Ranch in Challis. This year's issue is "Managing Cultural Landscapes"
- The 2005 IASCD Conference is scheduled for November 13-16 and will be held in Boise at the DoubleTree Riverside in Boise
- The 2006 IASCD Conference is scheduled for November 12-15 and will be held at the Red Lion in Pocatello
- NACD's annual meeting is in Atlanta this year - February 5<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>. Most IASCD Directors will be attending
- The 2005 Legislative Conference is scheduled for April 3-5 in Washington DC. The IASCD will not be sending a representative this year



- New health insurance policies for IASCD field staff being researched. Regence Blue Shield offering a savings of 6%
- Staff Update:
  - Carl Rudeen (Habitat Specialist in Salmon USBWP office) replaced by Wendy Koons
  - Karie Pappani replaced Jes Erling as a Water Quality Resource Conservationist (WQRC) in the Pocatello office
  - Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF) has funded the hiring of a new project planner in Salmon – Ingrid Enschede to begin work January 21<sup>st</sup>
  - Mark Dallan resigned his position as Water Quality Analyst (Twin Falls office) and will be leaving at the end of the month
  - Dan McCarty (WQRC in Lewiston) accepted a position with the Department of Agriculture – no replacement as of yet
  - Carolyn Firth likely leaving her position as a WQRC (Burley office) in February
- The IASCD Information and Education Committee officially changed its name to the “Public Outreach Committee”
- The IASCD to be conducting an internal financial review and/or audit this spring. The check signing policy will also be reviewed
- Scott Koberg and Jim McCall attending Leadership Idaho Agriculture (LIA). Hawley thanked the Commission for their contribution to Koberg's tuition/expenses
- The IASCD Personnel Policy Manual undergoing revisions. New policy on overtime/comp time requirements will be included
- Spring Division Meeting Schedule:
  - Division I: March 11<sup>th</sup> in Sandpoint
  - Division II: March 10<sup>th</sup> in Nez Perce
  - Division III: February 25<sup>th</sup> in Fruitland
  - Division IV: March 1<sup>st</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> in Twin Falls
  - Division V: March 3<sup>rd</sup> in Pocatello
  - Division VI: March 2<sup>nd</sup> in Idaho Falls
- Resolution 04-4 was passed during 2004 Conference – re-forming the “Partnership Advisory Committee”
  - Function: to strengthen Idaho's Conservation Partnership, facilitate conflict resolution, and aid in the development of new partnerships
  - Members: ISCC Chairman, IASCD President, RC&D Council member, NRCS delegate, IDEA representative, IASCD Auxiliary representative
  - Meeting Schedule: no initial meeting dates set – committee to establish their own rules of operation
  - Leadership: It is suggested that chairmanship rotate on an annual basis. No term limits set

Reid moved that the chairman of the Partnership Advisory Committee be the ISCC chairman by default. Evans seconded and the motion passed.

## **Sponsorship**

Ambrose presented four requests for sponsorship in 2005. IDEA requested their usual amount of \$1,800 - \$600 per Division. Reid moved to approve IDEA sponsorship in the amount of \$1,800 and Evans seconded. The motion carried. The Idaho Envirothon contest requested sponsorship, although no amount was specified. The Commission approved \$1,000 for the 2004 contest and it was suggested the same amount be supplied again this year. Evans moved to approve \$1,000 be allocated to the Idaho Envirothon contest. Reid seconded the motion and it carried. The Idaho State Land and Soil Evaluation Event wrote the Commission in November, asking for a \$500 contribution for the 2005 event. Nicolescu acknowledged that as the Soil Conservation Commission, it certainly stood to reason that we should support this event. After some discussion, Evans moved to support the Land and Soil Evaluation Event with a contribution of \$350 for 2005. Reid seconded the motion and it carried. The final request for sponsorship was from the Idaho Forestry Contest. Last year, \$1,000 was allocated for this event. Whittom suggested the Commission increase its funding of the Forestry Contest. Evans moved to approve a \$1,000 provision to the Forestry Contest and Reid seconded. Whittom urged the Commission consider increasing the amount to better assist the Forestry contest. After some discussion, Evans amended his motion to reflect a \$1,500 contribution to the Forestry Contest. Reid seconded and the motion passed.

## **Water Quality Program for Agriculture (WQPA)**

Burleigh distributed a summary of WQPA projects from FY 2000 through FY 2004 and included a list of potential projects for FY 2005. Of the ten projects approved and prioritized in November 2004, nine were offered commitment letters for a total of \$1,117,233.

## **2005 Meeting Dates**

The following dates were set for the next year of Commission meetings:

- March 14, 2005
- May 23, 2005
- July 11, 2005 (10 am – 5 pm)
- July 12, 2005 (8:30 am – 12:30 pm)
- September 19, 2005
- November 13, 2005 (2 pm – 5 pm)
- November 16, 2005 (8:30 am – 12:30 pm)
- January 9, 2006 (10 am – 5 pm)
- January 10, 2006 (8:30 am – 12:30 pm)

## **CREP**

Nicolescu informed the Commission that discussions on CREP have been going well; however, it appears that in conversations with the Governor's office, funding is not forthcoming. Nicolescu suggested that perhaps some amount of funding be secured by moving funds from the Resource Conservation and Rangeland Development Program (RCRDP). Lengthy discussion ensued regarding the current CREP proposal and what it may mean for the Commission. Concerns were expressed over the potential funding sources and whether or not RCRDP funds would at some point be replaced if reallocated.

## **State Revolving Fund (SRF)**

Mastin gave an update of the SRF program. She noted that our loan agreement with the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) had been modified in order to account for the changing terms (payment dates) on the Preston, Riverdale and Mink Creek Canal Company's loan. She also reported that there had been some preliminary talk of funding the Lindsey Lateral project with SRF funds.

## **Adjournment**

With all agenda items for the day having been completed, business concluded for the day. The meeting was adjourned at 5:01 pm and was scheduled to reconvene at 8:00 am the following morning (January 11, 2005).

Respectfully submitted by Jenn Ambrose, Administrative Assistant.